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(11) EP 0 889 636 A2

(12) EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION

(43) Date of publication:
07.01.1999 Bulletin 1999/01

(51) Int Cl.⁶: H04N 1/32, H04L 29/06

(21) Application number: 98305209.3

(22) Date of filing: 30.06.1998

(84) Designated Contracting States:
AT BE CH CY DE DK ES FI FR GB GR IE IT LI LU
MC NL PT SE
Designated Extension States:
AL LT LV MK RO SI

- Ohta, Yoshinori
Asaka-shi, Saitama (JP)
- Sakamoto, Koichi
Asaka-shi, Saitama (JP)
- Haneda, Norihisa
Asaka-shi, Saitama (JP)
- Nakajima, Nobuyoshi,
c/o Fuji Photo Film Co., Ltd.
Ashigara-kami-gun, Kanagawa 258-0023 (JP)

(30) Priority: 30.06.1997 JP 188998/97
30.06.1997 JP 188999/97
30.09.1997 JP 282648/97
01.05.1998 JP 135912/98

(71) Applicant: FUJI PHOTO FILM CO., LTD.
Kanagawa-ken (JP)

(74) Representative: Tomlinson, Kerry John
Frank B. Dehn & Co.,
European Patent Attorneys,
179 Queen Victoria Street
London EC4V 4EL (GB)

(72) Inventors:
• Shilmori, Yoshiko
Asaka-shi, Saitama (JP)

(54) Image communication system and method

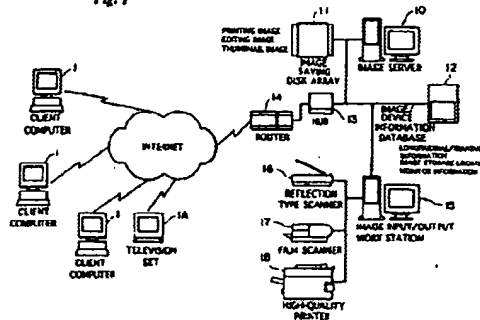
(57) A system in which an editing server (10) and a lot of client computers (1) are capable of communicating with one another, and an edited image can be generated by the plurality of client computers.

When image data is transmitted from the image server to the client computer, the resolution of image data to be transmitted is reduced in correspondence with the resolution of a monitor display device connected to the client computer. Further, the number of colors of an image represented by the image data is decreased in correspondence with the number of colors which can be displayed on the monitor display device. The data quantity of the image data to be transmitted is reduced, so that time required to transmit the image data is shortened.

A user image to be synthesized on a template image is read in the client computer. Image data representing the template image used for the image synthesis and image data representing a mask image are transmitted from the main image server to the client computer. In the client computer, image synthesis processing is performed. Image data representing an area required for image synthesis of the user image used for the image synthesis is extracted. The extracted user image data and synthesis information required for the synthesis are transmitted from the client computer to the main image server, where a composite image is printed.

A lot of client computers and an editing server are connected to one another via an internet. One of the client computers generates an edited image, and another client computer reads the generated edited image. The process of the editing can be also confirmed on a display screen by a client computer which does not relate to the editing.

Fig. 1



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